

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Scott Tulino on 3/4/2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 1 has been rewritten as follows:

--1. A securing clip having an S-shaped cross-section formed by first and third free end segments, a second shared segment and two closed end portions for securing a first panel having a hole to a second panel having a hole and a regulating wall, the securing clip comprising:

a first U-shaped fitting, formed by the first segment and the second segment and a first closed end portion, comprising a first engaging pawl on an inner wall of the first U-shaped fitting for engaging the hole in the first panel; and

a second U-shaped fitting, formed by the third segment and the second segment and a second closed end portion, comprising:

a pair of engagement walls and a resilient wall piece on said third segment, said resilient wall piece being separated from the pair of engagement walls by slits and extending from the free end of the third segment through the second closed end of the U shape such that a free end portion of the resilient wall piece extends beyond the second closed end;

a second engaging pawl on an inner wall of the second segment for engaging the hole in the second panel;

an engaging face that is on an end of each engagement wall and that faces an opening in the second closed end portion; and

a third engaging pawl on an inner wall of the resilient wall piece and opposing said second engaging pawl, wherein the second engaging pawl and the third engaging pawl overlap close to one another vertically,

Art Unit: 3679

the securing clip being arranged such that, when the second panel and the engagement wall are engaged, said engagement face of the engagement wall is inclined such that it is capable of engaging the regulating wall of the second panel to create a wedging effect to prevent detachment of the clip and the second panel, wherein the free end portion of the resilient wall is lifted to detach the second pawl from the hole in the second panel.--

Claims 5, 14-17, 19, 23-31 have been cancelled.

Claims 18 and 22, Line 1: "Claim 14" has been changed to --Claim 1--.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The primary reason for the allowance of the claims is that the prior art of record neither teaches nor suggests the inclusion of the limitation of "resilient wall piece being separated from the pair of engagement walls by slits and extending from the free end of the third segment through the second closed end of the U shape such that a free end portion of the resilient wall piece extends beyond the second closed end; a second engaging pawl on an inner wall of the second segment for engaging the hole in the second panel; said pair of engagement walls comprising an engaging face at an end of the engagement wall that faces an opening in the second closed end portion; and a third engaging pawl on an inner wall of the resilient wall piece and opposing said second engaging pawl, wherein the second engaging pawl and the third engaging pawl overlap close to one another vertically, the securing clip being arranged such that, when the second panel and the engagement wall are engaged, said engagement face of the engagement wall is inclined such that it is capable of engaging the regulating wall of the second panel to create a wedging effect to prevent detachment of the clip and the

Art Unit: 3679

second panel , wherein the free end portion of the resilient wall is lifted to detach the second pawl from the hole in the second panel” (Claim 1, Lines 12-29). The closest prior art of record, Yasuda, Bakke et al, and Petrakis et al taken as a whole, disclose a securing clip system significantly as claimed, but does not provide any teaching, suggestion, or motivation to modify the prior art as such. There is no cogent reasoning that is unequivocally independent of hindsight that would have led one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the prior art to obtain the applicant’s invention.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOSHUA T. KENNEDY whose telephone number is (571)272-8297. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 7am - 3:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3679

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Joshua T. Kennedy/
Examiner, Art Unit 3679

/Daniel P. Stodola/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3679